

Message Text

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PAGE 01 MADRID 00608 201218Z
ACTION SIL-01

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-07 L-03 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 PRS-01
SP-02 SS-15 USIA-06 COME-00 EB-08 LAB-04 /085 W
-----078822 201234Z /11/40

P 181820Z JAN 78
FM AMEMBASSY MADRID
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 3141
INFO AMEMBASSY BONN
AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN
AMEMBASSY LISBON
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY OSLO
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY ROME
AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE
USMISSION USNATO
USMISSION GENEVA

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 608

C O R R E C T E D C O P Y (TEXT)

USEEC AND USOECD ALSO FOR EMBASSIES

E.O. 11652 GDS
TAGS: ELAB, PINT, SP, ICFTU, ILO
SUBJECT: ICFTU SEC GEN OTTO KERSTEN VISITS UGT IN MADRID

1. ICFTU SEC GEN OTTO KERSTEN STOPPED OVER BRIEFLY IN
MADRID ON JANUARY 17 ENROUTE TO ROME, ARRIVING 3 P.M.
AND DEPARTING EARLY MORNING JANUARY 18. HE MET WITH
UGT SEC GEN NICOLAS REDONDO AND UGT EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE,
AND ALSO HELD A PRESS CONFERENCE WHICH RECEIVED SOME
PRIME-TIME TV COVERAGE (SEE BELOW).

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2. FOLLOWING A LATE DINNER WITH REDONDO AND TOP
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS (INCLUDING INTERNATIONAL
RELATIONS SECRETARY MANUEL SIMON, INDUSTRIAL FEDERATIONS
SECRETARY MANUEL GARNACHO, TREASURER JESUS MANCHO, AND
PSOE DEPUTY MANUEL CHAVES), KERSTEN AND HIS UGT DINNER
HOSTS MET VERY INFORMALLY WITH WEST GERMAN, BRITISH AND

U.S. LABOR ATTACHES. KERSTEN SAID HE WAS PLEASED WITH THE BRIEF BUT PITHY TV INTERVIEW DURING WHICH HE WAS ABLE TO SQUEEZE IN STATEMENTS ON A) THE ICFTU INCLINATION TO HOLD ITS NEXT WORLD CONGRESS IN YPA IN; B) THE STATUS OF THE ILO SINCE THE U.S. WITHDRAWAL AND HIS HOPE THAT THE U.S. WOULD SOON RETURN; AND C) THE UGT'S ROLE AS SPAIN'S PRINCIPAL ICFTU AFFILIATE. WITH RESPECT TO THE ILO, KERSTEN LATER COMMENTED TO LABATT THAT ILO DIRECTOR GENERAL BLANCHARD HAD CONFIRMED TO HIM A FEW DAYS AGO THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAD BEEN ABLE TO RESOLVE THE FINANCIAL PROBLEMS PRECIPITATED BY OUR WITHDRAWAL, AND THAT - MORE IMPORTANT - "THE EXTRA MONEY HAD COME FROM THE RIGHT NATIONS" (I.E. NOT FROM THE USSR OR EAST BLOC).

3. SIMON WAS DELIGHTED THAT KERSTEN HAD GOTTEN ONE AND A HALF MINUTES OF PRIME TV TIME DURING THE NATIONALLY BROADCAST EVENING NEWSCAST. ALTHOUGH KERSTEN HAD BEEN CAREFUL NOT TO MAKE ANY STATEMENTS WHICH COULD HAVE BEEN CONSTRUED AS FAVORABLE TO THE UGT IN THE CONTEXT OF THE CURRENT PLANT ELECTIONS, IT WOULD NOT PASS UNNOTICED THAT KERSTEN WAS SPEAKING FROM UGT HEADQUARTERS WITH UGT POSTERS SHOWING CLEARLY IN THE BACKGROUND. ALTHOUGH THE COMMUNIST-DOMINATED WORKERS' COMMISSIONS (SWC) MIGHT WELL CRY FOUL AND CHARGE KERSTEN WITH INTERFERING IN INTERNAL SPANISH AFFAIRS, REDONDO TOLD LABATT HE WAS NONETHELESS CONFIDENTIAL

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VERY SATISFIED WITH KERSTEN'S BRIEF STOPOVER IN TERMS OF HELPFUL PUBLICITY FOR THE UGT. PICKING UP ON THAT THEME, SIMON ADDED THAT IT WAS POLITICALLY SIGNIFICANT THAT WHILE THE UGT COULD GET AWAY WITH HAVING THE ICFTU'S TOP MAN VISIT THEM DURING PLANT ELECTIONS AND HAVE IT BENEFIT THEM, THE SWC COULD NOT HAVE DONE THE SAME WITH WFTU'S PRAGUE-BASED SECGEN GENSOUS OR THE INDEPENDENT SOCIALIST USO (ANTI-MERGER ELEMENT) WITH THE WCL'S KULAKOWSKI. STABLER

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Draft Date: 18 jan 1978
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Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Case Number: n/a
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